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General Headquarters, Washington, D. C.

CONTENTS FOR WEEK OF MAY 14, 1923. Vol. II. No. 11.

Note to Teachers—The next issue of the Geographic News Bulletin will be upon the reopening of schools in October. The Bulletin is not issued during the summer vacation months.

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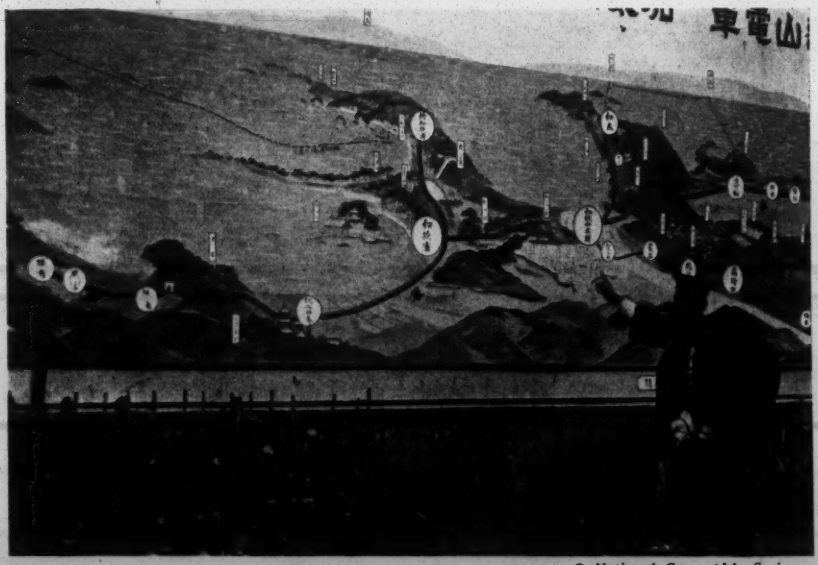

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A BILLBOARD ADVERTISING A SEASIDE RESORT NEAR OSAKA

The Japanese railways are clever advertisers. Neat billboards at each station show the direction and distance of all places of interest accessible from that place. Special rates are given students to enable them to know their country by seeing it.

HOW TO OBTAIN THE BULLETIN

The Geographic News Bulletin is published weekly throughout the school year (thirty issues) and will be mailed to teachers for one year upon receipt of 25 cents (in stamps or money order). Entered as second-class matter, January 27, 1922, at the Post Office at Washington, D. C., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized February 9, 1922.

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Tokyo: A Community of Towns

ONE more evidence of Japan's rapid adoption of western ways is found in the launching of a plan for a bigger and better Tokyo.

For all the guidebooks tell, you might expect to find Tokyo simply another Japanese city, overgrown and overcrowded, with the old East and the new West in garish jumble, with our own National Capital's wholesome idea of numerous parks and more than Boston's inheritance of crooked streets.

Should you sail up the Bay of Tokyo to Yokohama, and there seek to buy a railroad ticket to Tokyo, 18 miles to the north, you could sense the first distinctive flavor of Japan's capital. Your ticket would be for Shinagawa or Shimbashi, not Tokyo, nor yet for Yedo, the older name of the city which you probably soon would be using in dating your letters.

Villages Which Grew Together

Your ticket experience would be equivalent to trying to purchase a ticket for New York and having the agent hand you one for Brooklyn or Harlem. For Tokyo is not a city slowly grown from a town; it is a coagulation of villages, a civic protoplasm, a series of communities spread over some thirty square miles with a population of two and a quarter millon people.

Next there is the cover of the guidebook you arm yourself with to find your way about Tokyo. A railway ticket and a guidebook cover are not negligible things to the keen perceptions of an American traveler. It is of such casual entities that impressions are made.

The guidebook you acquire is "An Official Guide to Eastern Asia" which you find upon turning to the inside cover is "Prepared by the Imperial Japanese Government Railways." Well, you do not notice that fact until you have been around Tokyo for a few days, and then the cumulative effect of the "official" is borne in upon you. You are not politically minded. You went to Tokyo to see it. Perhaps you will go home and have to acquire some opinions somewhere to answer questions of inquiring friends; but just now you are interested in cherry blossoms, and the noisy lotus flowers that bloom in the spring, pop, pop, as you unconsciously paraphrase it, or in seeing a dolls' festival, a dance by geisha girls, or in visiting the "Temple of Knotty Timber" where lies buried Koizumi Yakumo, native name taken by Lafcadio Hearn when he became a Japanese citizen.

A City of Many Charms

The fact that many things seem to be officially ordered does not annoy you as did the "Verboten" signs in Berlin. It is just one of the impressions you get. You are willing to leave its significance entirely to the publicists while you give yourself over to the spell of a most elusive and fascinating city.

Now a guidebook is expected to give some needful facts, and sometimes does, but you find this one does more than that. It gives you an atmosphere—unconsciously, it is true, but definitely, just the same. Under the heading of "January" it informs you seriously that "people are now in their very best

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A GLASS LENS AND MOUNTING BUILT IN FRANCE FOR THE KILAUEA, HAWAII, LIGHTHOUSE

(See Bulletin No. 2)

This light gives a double flash of 940,000 candle power every 10 seconds. The lens and mounting weigh nearly four tons, turning on a mercury float.

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A Lighthouse, a Beach, and Some Geology

A DISASTROUS fire at Nantasket Beach, Massachusetts, directs attention to a stretch of New England coast which has a triple geographical interest.

Here Nature discloses to the most casual observer a frequent, but generally hidden, process of the making of this continent. The Federal government has erected nearby one of the world's most remarkable lighthouses. The State of Massachusetts has made its citizens, not the concessionaires, the sovereigns of one of the finest beaches on the north Atlantic coast.

Shaped Like Cape Cod

Nantasket Beach stretches for an unbroken five miles along the seaward side of a peninsula which distends its scrawny neck from the juncture of the towns of Cohasset and Hull, turns its Adam's apple toward the pleasant inland waterway from Boston harbor, and bends its head low, as if in reverence to historic Hingham, on this inland shore. The formation of the peninsula bears an uncanny miniature likeness to that of Cape Cod, farther south.

Minot's Light flashes its "I-4-3" signal over a granite shore which once was the bane of mariners and now is the blessing of Boston. A lighthouse is symbolic of man's conquest of nature; this one seems to epitomize the steadfastness of the people who for years picked the splintered wreckage of every storm from the rocks where they now plant their summer homes and along the sands where they now find surcease from the city's summer heat.

Within a nine-year period ending in the forties two score vessels were dashed to pieces on the Cohasset reefs and in six of these the entire crew perished.

First Beacon Washed Away

The first lighthouse was built in 1850. One year later a great gale snapped it off as if it had been an old stick, and engulfed its two tenders. Then began the task of building, on this sea-circled rock, exposed only at low tide in certain seasons, a tower that would defy any storm.

From the quarries of Quincy came the granite and the stonecutters who worked with a sculptor's precision to shape and fit the blocks of the new structure. Even harder was the task of chiseling off a base for the structure on the half-submerged reef.

In all of the year 1855 the jealous sea allowed but 130 working hours, and the following year was little better. No man could work on the rocks who could not swim, no boat was landed there except in company of another boat, and while the men were working during the precious low-tide, smooth-sea hours, a boat always was waiting to rescue those washed from the rocks.

An Engineering Triumph

After three years of this precarious and patient task the first stone of the present structure was laid. Meanwhile the stones had been cut, fitted, and

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humor, going about paying New Year calls" and, if you are in Tokyo in January you find that the guidebook spoke truly. Gradually you begin to realize that the tradition, the precedent, the immemorial customs of the old Japan do project through all its modernism, so that it is perfectly proper to predict what human nature will be like at any given period.

Samples of Official Frankness

You read further between the lines. You note that the Imperial Palace, that curious "half-and-half" architectural creation of Eastern and Western ideas, "is jealously guarded against the entrance of ordinary persons." And farther on that the "Korakuen Garden is perhaps the most celebrated landscape garden in Tokyo accessible (subject to special permission) to ordinary persons." Then one begins to realize why members of a Japanese commission which visited Washington some years ago were frankly impressed most deeply by our National Capital's Rock Creek Park, a vast place, unrestricted, and left as nature made it save for automobile roads and bridle paths. Neither in their own country nor in Europe, they said, had they observed any park exactly like that.

The Paradox of Tokyo

Only the very casual visitor will fail to sense the paradox of Tokyo. By official regulation much of the mechanics of living is rigid; but in many other respects it may well rank as one of the most diverse cities in the world. Each of its amalgamated villages has its own customs and viewpoints. Aristocratic Kojimachi is very unlike Kanda, the city's "Latin quarter." Busy, modern Nihombashi, with its "Broadway" and "Billingsgate" is a far cry from Shiba, village of the Tower Gate and giant bell, of native restaurants and distinctive dances.

It almost seems as if only a dull-witted person might write a book about Tokyo; a more sensitive observer would write many volumes upon many aspects of a city where even the "viewing of flowers" has been formalized, where commercial enterprise overlays the Samurai teachings that held profit a disgrace, where electric railways disturb the mystic quiet of the Shinto Shrine in which the ordeals of boiling water and walking on hot coals still are practiced.

Easy To Find Your Way

For the humble traveler by tram, it is exceedingly difficult to get lost in Tokyo. Each car bears the number of its route and inside, at the place where, in America, one would see hosiery and washing powder advertisements, there is a comprehensive map of the city criss-crossed and circled by lines of many colors corresponding to the numbered routes. A knowledge of the language is superfluous. From the guidebook map, or better, from the free map furnished by the Japan Tourist Bureau, which seeks to make Japanese travel delightful, one locates the place he seeks and the place where he stands. Then it is a mere matter of matching numbers and colors to get to any spot within the circular railway which forms the tire of the transportation wheel.

This idea of placing a map of the city in the cars themselves instead of on some sequestered wall around the station may rob the traveler of the cultural advantages of tempting pictures of butter and motor cars, but it makes it easy to wander from village to village within the city limits with the minimum of delay and sign language.

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Abraham and Tutankhamen

WITH the civilized world still amazed at the tangible evidences of 3300 years ago found in Tutankhamen's tomb, come dispatches telling how the time line of recorded history even now is being pushed farther back in Mesopotamia.

Digging into the ruins at El-Mukaiyar really means probing the remains of "Ur of the Chaldeans," home city of Abraham and later capital of Nebuchadnezzar, Napoleon of Babylon.

Back to Genesis XI

News reports tell of a house, just uncovered, thought to be 5000 years old. The pick and the shovel already have carried secular history to the period of the eleventh chapter of Genesis, have found evidence to reconstruct the daily life of the times of Abraham, and have revealed the essential differences of customs in the Tigris-Euphrates delta from those of Tutankhamen's time along the Nile.

The familiar story of the tower of Babel gives the clue to one such difference. You will recall how the children of Noah, in the Bible narrative, said to one another, "Let us build us a city, and a tower."

The temples of Egypt had a succession of chambers on the ground level; a characteristic of a Babylonian temple were its chambers arranged vertically, each successive story being a little smaller than the one beneath. In modern parlance, Egyptians tended toward bungalow architecture; the Babylonians had the first skyscrapers.

One, then, may picture Babylonia of Abraham's time as a land dotted with busy towns, each walled around with brick, and having a tower as pretentious as it could afford.

Rooms Like Pullman Cars

The writer of Genesis makes another significant statement when he records that these early Semitic peoples "had brick for stone, and slime they had for mortar." There being no stone in this region the use of brick was universal, and this absence of both stone and wood had a marked influence upon the dwellings. Roof-beams were scarce, hence the rooms were long and narrow, even in the palace of the city's priest-king, which usually adjoined the tower.

Politically, Babylon was not yet a nation. Ur, Umma and Lagash were city-states comparable in their pride and prowess to Florence, Venice and Milan of medieval Europe.

How they came to clash is easily understood by noting their plan. In the center were tower and palace, around these were dwellings, and this cluster of buildings was rimmed with cultivated land. Beyond this cultivated belt was the pasture land, netted with irrigation canals, always held in common. As the towns grew and more grazing land was needed trouble arose. "And there was a strife between the herdmen of Abraham's cattle and the herdmen of Lot's cattle."

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assembled for conveyance on an island in Cohasset harbor. One by one, with no single loss of life, nor a single wasted trip for a wrong stone, 1,079 of these great granite blocks were put in place. Today the New World Solomon's Temple stands as firm as the day the first light flashed from its beacon, in 1855. Often the spray of the waves dashes against the windows of its light, 85 feet high.

Threading its way between the boulders of the shore and the salt marshes runs Jerusalem Road with its beautiful summer homes, linking residential Cohasset with the State Park reservation at Nantasket. Upon a rocky eminence at one end of Nantasket beach is a fashionable hotel; at the other are rows of modest cottages. Between are bath houses, operated at cost, by the State of Massachusetts, models of cleanliness, convenience, and comfort.

Trust to Bathers' Conscience

Two characteristics of this beach impress the visitor. New England takes its liberties seriously; even to refraining from any restrictions upon bathing suits. No policemen are armed with tape measures, there is no code posted anywhere about the style of bathing suits. The authorities hold that this policy makes for modesty.

Those who prefer the Coney Island type of amusement may indulge their taste, but the amusement parks are far back from the shore line so that even at highest tide tens of thousands of bathers can find ample space in the sand and under the sun.

The granite boulders of Cohasset tell a long, long story of world-building forces, active in many regions, but seldom so apparent as here. A geologist need only scan the rocky pages of Cohasset and Hull to reconstruct the past.

Once upon a time, his story runs, perhaps a hundred million years ago during the age of the first life on this sphere, lofty Alpine mountains pierced the clouds in this region.

When Granite Was Formed

Far beneath them, they exerted a tremendous pressure, at least fifteen thousand pounds per inch, and formed granite. In the course of millenniums these mountains were worn entirely away, at the rate of an inch or so per century, and then the buried granite began to warp and corrugate as the asphalt does in a pavement on a hot day, and the softer materials about it were worn gradually away.

Finally the granite reached the surface, cracked and faulted in places, mixed with lava in others, at which time formed the ledges much as they now appear along this coast.

Nature had not quite finished her work. The rocks had yet to be given their final dressing and polishing. The ice-age came to New England, and slowly over the granite crept millions of tons of ice. Glaciers ground their way southward, ripping channels in granite and lava, scraping and scratching ridges, and filling in depressions with the gravel and clay they carried along.

Before the ice withdrew it contributed the final touch by deftly poising numerous boulders on ridges where they remain today, inexplicable "balanced rocks" to the uninitiated. Such a rock is "Tipping Rock" at Cohasset.

At Nantasket Beach this granite ledge dipped under the sea a bit; waves set to work piling up sand thereon. The rocks reappear at Allerton and Pemberton, at the North end of the peninsula, so that the beach is literally a cushion of sand, placed in a hammock of rock, for a city's summer resting place.

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To Hunt Early American History Clues in China

GRAINS of corn, garnered along the Tibet-Burma frontier of China, may be the botanical Rosetta Stone of the earliest American history yet recorded.

Just as a piece of black basalt unlocked the annals of hidden Egyptian centuries, so the corn kernels sought by a National Geographic Society expedition may reveal clues of 100-per cent Americans long years before Columbus came, or even before denizens of Chaco Canyon's giant communal apartment houses mysteriously disappeared.

Ancient Income Taxes

The facts which hold forth this hope are these:

Indian corn, or maize, is of undoubted American origin. But Chinese records show that corn was grown in China before Columbus' time. Marco Polo did not mention it; but he also overlooked tea. Chinese records—records which might today be described as income tax returns—show that long before 1492 tribute corn was as acceptable as the latter-day tribute silk. In fact it was nicknamed "imperial wheat." One tribute-list contains the entry, "Of wheat called Mayz, twentie millions two hundred and fiftie thousand hanegs," which was about 30 million bushels.

The particular clue which the National Geographic Society's expedition will work upon is that furnished by the mystery of the waxy endosperm. The tissue inside a grain of American field corn contains starch; that of sweet corn contains sugar. In a few places of China, western Yunnan among them, this tissue is found to be waxy.

Sherlock Holmes of Botany

The Sherlock Holmes of botany will study this variation. By noting the localities where it appears he may be able to tell the route by which it entered China. It is conceivable he might estimate how long it took a product which is as indigenous to America as the potato to develop in its new environment.

The corn quest is but one of the missions of The Society's expedition into little-known Yunnan. Scientists will study the bark of the chestnut tree and observe the flora of one of the choicest flower garden spots of the world. Plant life of western China has been found generally adaptable to the United States; and it is expected that new varieties of flowers and fruits will be imported and assimilated readily among our plant and orchard population.

The study of Chinese corn may extend the corn-growing acreage of the United States considerably. For the waxy maize has characteristics which seem to adapt it for regions where droughts occur. Its erect leaf blades, their arrangement on one side of the stalk, and its production of silks before the ears emerge combine to prevent drying out of the silks before pollination. To the south of Yunnan, in Burma, the husks of waxy maize are used as wrappers

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Contrast to Egyptian Life

The contrast between this town life period of Babylonia and the Empire of Egypt was as great as that between our own New England communities of the mid-eighteenth century and the regal splendor of France under Louis XIV.

This "small town" period of Babylonia disappeared, however, with the conquests of Sargon, King of Akkad (not the Assyrian) who ruled nearly 2500 years before Tutankhamen was interred.

Further explorations among the remains of the city of Abraham will be secondary to the greatest single find in this region—the code of Hammurabi. This scholarly king ruled in Babylon about 2300 B. C., and the laws he codified are proof of a high civilization built up through many centuries before his time.

Wine Merchants Supervised

Raids on gay road-house parties were common in those days. Wine selling was regulated and the enforcement was put squarely up to the vendor. One section of the penal code provided, "If a wine merchant has allowed riotous characters to assemble in her house, and those riotous characters (she) has not seized and driven to the palace, that wine merchant shall be put to death."

A maid might sue for a breach of promise, a landholder had to pay a heavier tax if he did not cultivate his allotment, guardians were provided for estates of widows and orphans.

Mounds and occasional masses of brick work laid bare by winter rains, and ditches which hint at the canals of an elaborate irrigation system, are the only surface traces left in lower Mesopotamia today of this splendid civilization.

One puts to himself many questions as he gazes at these slight visible vestiges of a people of whom James Baikie wrote, "In Babylonia life in Abraham's time was practically as thoroughly organized and as carefully regulated as it is in our own."

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AN ASPHALT SPRING IN MESOPOTAMIA

It is probable that it was this bitumen to which Genesis refers where it says "they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar." (See Bulletin No. 3)

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Congo: The Rainbow's End in Africa

A COUNTRY nearly four times the size of Texas which was founded by a committee, provided pocket money for a king, and now may be mined by a syndicate—such is Belgian Congo.

Since Leopold II turned wistful eyes toward the "black gold," or rubber, of the Congo country and Henry M. Stanley proved that white men could survive there, this land of the rainbow's end has frequently held public attention, because of reports that gold has been found there.

When Congo Stirred America

Many years ago rumors of gold, together with rumors of cruelty to natives, sent the name "Congo" echoing around the world. The United States Senate discussed the Congo Free State, as the country then was known, and alleged atrocities were deplored in many mass meetings.

In the year America was celebrating her Independence Centennial Belgium's young king helped form a society, along with other European governments and geographers, to explore Africa. After Stanley's expedition of the following year a committee of this society, continuing the work, developed into the International Association of the Congo. This body sought to unite various territories in Central Africa into a single state and obtain recognition as a political entity. The United States was the first to accord this recognition, whereupon the Congo Free State was born, in 1884.

Called "Free State"; Was Neither

Actually the new political division, the largest in Africa except the French Sahara, was neither a state nor free. It was an association for its governance which was recognized; and Leopold II, personally, not in his capacity of King of the Belgians, was its ruler. Leopold bequeathed the territory to his country in his will.

Belgian Congo is a bowl-like plateau, criss-crossed by rivers, polka-dotted by marshes, ribbed with rock, and blanketed throughout with the equatorial forest. The veritable jungle of this humid wilderness surpasses any meaning the temperate zone dweller attaches to the word "forest."

Into these primeval forests, Livingstone wrote, "the sun, though vertical, cannot penetrate, except by sending down at midday thin pencils of rays into the gloom. The rain water stands for months in stagnant pools made by the feet of elephants. The climbing plants, from the size of a whipcord to that of a man-of-war's hawser, are so numerous, that the ancient path is the only passage."

"Wearied With Eternal Green"

More recent explorers have commented especially upon the dire depression which besets the white man when he traverses this forest. "You are hemmed in by thickets which prevent you from penetrating the green depths on either

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for cheap cigars; a fact to which Kipling alludes in the "whackin' white cheroot" of "Mandalay."

To Battle Chestnut Blight

Of greatest economic import, perhaps, will be the study of chestnuts. The blight which has devastated chestnuts in the eastern United States has been found to be far older in China; hence types of chestnut trees surviving there are believed to have a blight-resisting quality.

Western Yunnan is both the Balkan-land and the Belgium of Asia. Atuntzi, one of the villages to be visited by the expedition, was taken and retaken five times before the Chinese wrested it from the Tibetans. Some inhabitants literally were skinned alive; many women and children were beheaded.

Curious customs arise from the remnants of races that mingle there. One traveler tells how greetings of divers derivations are modulated to fit various occasions. When a Chinese-Tibetan of the Tsu-Kou region would say "Hello" in roadside salutation he spreads out his hands, palms up. The gesture is suggestive of a society where notice of disarmament is the first principle of safety first. Meet him in his village and this same native will stick out his tongue at you in the orthodox Tibetan fashion. When he would ask a favor, or show great reverence, holding up his thumbs is his form of obeisance.

An "Independent China"

Yunnan and western Szechuan, into which the expedition also will go, are so different from China in their people, in their geography, and in their interest that they constitute an "independent China" in every respect except political control.

Three rivers, the Sulwin, the Mekong and the Yangtze, cut parallel valleys through a corrugated plateau with mountain peaks as high, if not higher, than our own Mount Whitney.

Nature and man disclose surprises on every hand—leaf-eating monkeys, snow-topped mountains, roped bridges which swing protesting mules airily across the frequent streams, green parrots feeding on red berries, gorgeous valleys of brilliant flowers, men bedecked with beautiful jewels, and hovels where human dirtiness, squalor and disease reach their lowest level.

Joseph F. Rock, famous botanist, who discovered the chaulmoogra trees, oil from which now is used to treat leprosy, will lead the expedition. Mr. Rock previously has explored every island in the Hawaiian group, conducted botanical expeditions in Siam and Java, and already has shipped thousands of specimens for mounting and has transmitted many living seeds and plants to Washington.

side, and, on gazing upwards, the dense canopy of foliage overhead forbids an untrammelled view of the heavens to the eyes so wearied with eternal green."

Hemmed in thus animal life is scarcely discernible, but monkeys break the silence with their chatter, butterflies of infinite variety and color flutter about the occasional open places, and conquering hordes of insects hold undisputed sway. Here the ants abound. White ones build curious structures against the trunks of trees. Others patiently carry the earth, bit by bit, to the treetops to fashion strange houses that often suggest some weird animal about to spring upon his prey.

Forming the northwestern boundary of the territory is the great Congo River, sometimes spreading out to five miles wide. Unfortunately for its commercial value this river breaks into a series of falls when it pierces through the Crystal Mountains from the great central plateau of Africa to the Atlantic. These rapids extend for nearly 200 miles, from Matadi to Leopoldville. To circumvent this barrier a railroad was constructed from Matadi to Stanley Pool.

Few more than 5,000 white people live in the Belgian Congo. Estimates of the native population range between ten and twenty millions. These natives, for the most part, are either of the Bantu race or pygmies.

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STONE LIGHTHOUSE ON MINOTS LEDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

This structure ranks among the difficult lighthouse engineering works of the world. During the first summer only 130 working hours were obtained on the rock, and after three years' work only four stones of the foundation had been laid. (See Bulletin No. 2.)